

II  
CI  
and J

an absorbent body enclosed between the two surface layers,

wherein the article further exhibits a wetting region adapted to be disposed adjacent the mucous membranes of the user, which is the region of the liquid-pervious surface layer which is intended to first be wetted by body fluid emitted to the article,

wherein the liquid-pervious surface layer within the wetting region is constituted of hydrophilic absorbent material that is adapted to retain moisture, at least at the surface of the liquid-pervious surface layer which is intended to be facing the user during use so as to maintain the mucous membranes of the user moist, and that all remaining parts of the liquid-pervious surface layer are constituted of a hydrophobic material.

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7. (Thrice amended) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the liquid-pervious surface layer comprises a laminate of a first liquid-pervious, hydrophobic material layer arranged closest to the absorbent body, and a second liquid-pervious, hydrophilic absorbent material layer, of substantially a same extension as the wetting region of the article, arranged outside the first material layer and intended to bear on the body of the user in the wetting region during use.

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13. (Thrice amended) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the article comprises a shaping member which, by means of influence from forces which the article is subjected to during use, has an ability to bring the wetting region into contact with the mucous membranes of the user.

65 sub I2 16. (Amended) A method for maintaining a mucous membrane of a user moist with an absorbent article, the absorbent article including an absorbent body, a liquid impervious layer, and a liquid pervious layer, the liquid pervious layer constituting both a hydrophobic material and a hydrophilic absorbent material, where the hydrophilic absorbent material forms a wetting region of the liquid pervious layer that is a region that is intended to be first wetted by body fluid and all remaining parts of the liquid-pervious layer are hydrophobic, the absorbent body being enclosed between the liquid pervious layer and the liquid impervious layer, the method comprising:

wearing the absorbent article such that the wetting region is adjacent the mucous membrane of the user and the wetting region receives body fluids emitted from the user;

retaining at least a portion of the body fluids in the hydrophilic absorbent material;

and

maintaining the mucous membrane of the user moist with the body fluids retained in the hydrophilic absorbent material of the wetting region.

Please add the following new claims:

old 65 sub I3 17. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein an extent of the wetting region is smaller than an extent of the absorbent body, and wherein the wetting region covers at least a portion of the absorbent body.

18. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein an extent of the wetting region is smaller than an extent of the absorbent body.

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cont'd sub 4  
19. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the remaining parts of the liquid-pervious surface layer extend over the absorbent body.

20. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 16, wherein an extent of the wetting region is smaller than an extent of the absorbent body, and wherein the wetting region covers at least a portion of the absorbent body.

21. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 16, wherein an extent of the wetting region is smaller than an extent of the absorbent body.

sub 4  
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22. (New) Absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the remaining parts of the liquid-pervious surface layer extend over the absorbent body.

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